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December 9, 2011

TO: Audit Committee

FROM: Sachi A. Hamai
Executive Officer

SUBJECT: **LOS ANGELES COUNTY FLAG POLICY (POLICY #3.100)**

We have examined the attached Los Angeles County Flag Policy (Policy #3.100) by reviewing past Board Orders and policy documents prepared by the State and Federal governments. We have also reached out to our County Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to discuss flag flying protocol. Although there are no significant policy changes to Policy #3.100, we are recommending the following ministerial changes be made:

- Add a hyphen to half-mast where it is missing in the policy (hyphen is underlined and printed in red).
- Delete the apostrophe after the word Veterans in the paragraphs relating to Veterans Day (strike through is in red).
- Delete paragraph relating to National Korean War Veterans' Armistice Day. The July 23, 1996 Board Order authorized the lowering of the flags to half-staff only until July 27, 2003 (strikethrough is in red).
- Update paragraph "Method of Notification" to more accurately reflect the current practice of notifying County Departments when to lower the flags (strikethrough and underline is in red).

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at (213) 974-1401.

SAH:rg

Attachment

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Los Angeles County **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY MANUAL**

3.100	Flag Policy	09/16/97
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PURPOSE

Provides County departments with clear protocols for flying the National, State, County and other flags at County facilities.

REFERENCE

January 12, 1965, Board Order - [Synopsis 25](#)

December 20, 1966, Board Order – [Synopsis 151](#)

March 26, 1968, Board Order – [Synopsis 216](#)

June 25, 1968, Board Order - [Synopsis 205](#)

June 27, 1989, Board Order - [Synopsis 3](#)

July 23, 1996, Board Order – [Synopsis 9](#)

September 16, 1997, Board Order - [Synopsis 14](#)

May 21, 2002, [Board Order](#) – [Synopsis 4](#)

POLICY

POLICY ON DISPLAYING THE FLAG AT HALF STAFF

All County departments shall display the flag(s) at half-staff at County buildings and



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grounds in accordance with this policy.

The Flag Code Title 36, U.S.C., Chapter 10 as amended by Public Law 322, 103rd Congress, approved September 13, 1994 states, "...by order of the President, the flag shall be flown at half-staff upon the death of principal figures of the United States government and the Governor of a State, territory, or possession, as a mark of respect to their memory. In the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag is to be displayed at half-staff according to Presidential instructions or orders, or in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law. In the event of the death of a present or former official of the government of any State, territory, or possession, the Governor of that State, territory, or possession may proclaim that the National Flag shall be flown at half-staff. The flag shall be flown at half-staff thirty days from the death of the President or a former President; ten days from the death of the Vice-President, the Chief Justice or a retired Chief Justice of the United States, or an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives; from the day of death until internment of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a Secretary of an executive or military department, a former Vice-President, or Governor of a State, territory, or possession; and on the day of death and the following day for a Member of Congress.

Display of Flag at Half Staff in Honor of Deceased Person

By Resolution of the Board of Supervisors, the flags of the United States, the State of California and the County of Los Angeles can be flown at half-staff upon the death of public officials at all levels of government. When death of the public official to be so honored is verified, flags shall be flown at half-staff immediately. The flags shall remain at half-staff during each day they are normally flown until lowered at the end of the day on which the funeral is solemnized.

On occasions where law enforcement personnel are killed in the line of duty, the Board of Supervisors may deem it appropriate to order all flags flown at half-staff. Finally, the honor and reverence accorded this solemn act should not be diminished by the display of the flag at half-staff on occasions of local tragedy wherein a County flag flown at half-staff would be more appropriate.

METHOD FOR PLACING FLAG AT HALF-STAFF

The flag shall be raised to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position midway between the top and the bottom of the staff. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. The flag must never touch the ground when being raised or lowered. The flag should be raised briskly and lowered slowly and ceremoniously. At no time shall any other flag be above the United States Flag. When



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the United States Flag is lowered to half-mast position, other flags should similarly be lowered.

WHEN TO DISPLAY FLAG AT HALF-STAFF

Memorial Day

The flags are flown at half-staff until 12:00 noon, and raised to the peak for the remainder of the day. This is covered by Public Law 829 passed by the 77th Congress. On motion by the Board of Supervisors, June 27, 1989, the flags of the United States, the State of California and the County of Los Angeles will be flown at half-staff on Memorial Day.

On motion by the Board of Supervisors, September 16, 1997, the **POW/MIA flag** would also be flown at half-staff on Memorial Day.

Veterans' Day

On motion by the Board of Supervisors, June 27, 1989, the flags of the United States, the State of California and the County of Los Angeles will be flown at half-staff on Veterans' Day.

On motion by the Board, September 16, 1997, the **POW/MIA flag** would also be flown at half-staff on Veterans' Day.

~~National Korean War Veterans' Armistice Day~~

~~On motion by the Board of Supervisors, July 23, 1996, the Board authorized the flying of flags at half-staff on July 27th of each year until the year 2003.~~

National POW/MIA Day

On motion by the Board of Supervisors, September 16, 1997, the Board recognized the **third Friday in September of each year** as a day for POW/MIA and their families throughout Los Angeles County.

The Board agreed to display the POW/MIA flag, as read in HR 116 and its Counterpart bill, U.S. S528, on Memorial Day, Armed Forces Day (third Saturday in May), Flag Day (June 14th), Independence Day, Veterans' Day and National POW/MIA day.

Peace Officers Memorial Day



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On motion by the Board of Supervisors, May 21, 2002, the United States flag will be flown at half-staff at all County facilities **each year on May 15th**, in accordance with Public Law 103-322 and the Congressional Joint Resolution approved October 1, 1962, designating May 15th of each year as "Peace Officers Memorial Day," and the week in which it falls as "Police Week."

Other Days

It is customary to honor prominent public officials holding office at the time of their deaths. Los Angeles County shall use the following list:

- Federal Government:** President, Vice President, US Supreme Court Justice, Members of Congress and a Secretary of an executive or military department
- State Government:** Governor, incumbent judge of the Superior Court or Justice Court*
- Local Government:** Members of the Board of Supervisors
- City Officials:** City Mayors and Council Members**

*In the event of the death of a Superior Court Judge, the County flag shall be flown at half-staff at all Superior Court facilities and at all County buildings in the branch Civic Center where the affected courts are located.

**The County flag shall be flown at half-staff at County facilities located in or near the Civic Center of an incorporated city when the City's Flags are lowered to half-staff.

Such Others: As ordered by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors.



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METHOD OF NOTIFICATION

The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, upon verifying the holiday or death of a person for whom the flags are to be flown at half-staff, shall notify the appropriate departments via e-mail, who shall in turn notify the facilities they are responsible for ~~indicated in the listing entitled, "Checklist for Lowering Flag Faxes"~~.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors

DATE ISSUED/SUNSET DATE

Issue Date: September 16, 1997
Review Date: November 21, 2002
Review Date: November 16, 2006

Sunset Review Date: September 16, 2001
Sunset Review Date: November 21, 2006
Sunset Review Date: November 21, ~~2014~~
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